SPEECH

OF

HON. RICHARD YATES,

DELIVERED AT ELGIN, ILL.

ON

THE FOURTH DAY OF JULY, A. D. 1865.

[As Reported for the Chicago Press.]

Eighty-nine years ago to-day, in Independence Hall in the city of Philadelphia, our revolutionary fathers, after a long and protracted war with England, declared the United States a free and independent nation, and amid the shouts of rejoicing, ringing of bells, and every demonstration of joy, proclaimed "liberty throughout the land and to all the inhabitants thereof."

As if to consecrate this sacred day forever, some of the most important events of our history, in the Providence of Almighty God, have signalized it.

On the 50th anniversary of this great national Jubilee died John Adams, aged 91 years, and Thomas Jefferson, aged 83 years, the two most prominent signers of the Declaration of Independence. After they had accomplished all the great objects of their lives, and crowned with honor and glory and with mature years, at the very time they had desired, on the 4th day of July, 1826, in the very hour of public rejoicing, while their own names were on all tongues, and while the sound of a nation's joy, rushing from our cities, ringing from our valleys, and echoing from our hills, was breaking on their ears, the freed spirits of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson took their flight together, and ascended to the God who gave them.

But again, as if to make the day forever consecrate to freedom and forever memorable in the annals of mankind, General Meade and the armies of the Potomac celebrated the 4th of July, 1862, in the grand battle of Gettysburg, on which depended as mighty issues as ever hung on the fortunes of a single field, and drove the rebel hordes across the Potomac to the tune of Yankee Doodle. [Cheers.] And all was quiet on the Potomac for a season, while Grant and Sherman, with the grand army of the Northwest, stormed the battlements of Vicksburg—planted our flag upon the heights where the rebel flag had floated, and, amid rejoicings wild and loud, marched in procession through the streets of the rebel stronghold to the glorious tune of Hail Columbia. Happy land. [Cheers.] Thus on the 4th day of July, 1862, the fate of the Army of the East and of the Army of the West, and of the war itself, was decided. The clouds broke from our political horoscope, and to-day we meet to celebrate the 4th day of July, 1776, which established, and the 4th day of July, 1865, which preserved to us and perpetuated our independence, power and glory as a people.

We celebrate the 4th day of July, 1776, because then commenced the great experiment whether man is capable of self-government. Our fathers boldly announced to the world in the great and immortal charter of freedom, the Declaration of Independence, the bible of the rights of man, which has just been read to you: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal—that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." All the great and noble men whose names were attached to the Declaration of Independence, are gone; but I stand up here to-day to say that that Declaration stands in all its original force and vigor—stands, not a single jot or tittle erased—and, by the blessing of God, it will stand forever. [Loud applause.]

They are gone, but the great truths enunciated therein survive, and will survive, a perpetual declaration to all the world, from generation to generation, of man's intrinsic, essential manhood, and of the great, undying, the eternal principles of individual and universal human liberty. [Applause.]

The American revolution was begun and fought through for an idea—to establish that man is a man—to vindicate the right of every man to equal rights and to equal citizenship, not by virtue of his birth or fortune, or of his nativity or color, but by virtue of his intrinsic, God-created manhood. Washington, in one of his letters, says: "What is it we are fighting against?—not against paying two cents per pound on tea. No, we are fighting against the right we have all along contended against, to tax us without our consent." Franklin, in writing home from France, said: "In Europe our cause is regarded by the masses as the cause of all mankind, and that in fighting for our liberties, we are fighting for theirs." Yes, our fathers were fighting, not against a little tax—not for themselves—but for their posterity and for the world—for man and human rights everywhere, and in all ages.

Our fathers asserted the great principle of the equal, inalienable rights of all men, not upon any abstract deduction of their own reasoning—not upon any mere human dogma—but planting themselves upon the firm foundations of God's eternal truth and justice, they declared that they were endowed, not by man, but by their Creator, with these inalienable rights; and that to secure these, governments were instituted among men, deriving their just power from the governed. Here is the whole principle of the government—that all power originates from the will of the people; that each citizen shall have his equal share in the burdens and in the privileges of the government; that however men may differ from each other in physique or in intellect, or in any of the elements of human character, they are all equal before the law—that so far as civil rights are concerned, each man is not superior or inferior to any other man, and is equally bound with every other man to exercise his powers, his vigilance, designing wisdom and efficiency in the eternal duty of guiding, preserving and protecting the state (applause); and that in all cases the will of a majority, not of any favored portion, but of all the people, shall be the law of the land.

For these great truths our fathers struggled round about the camps of liberty in the days that tried men's souls; for these the Declaration of Independence was announced, proclaiming the glad tidings of "liberty throughout the land and to all the inhabitants thereof;" for these our exquisitely adjusted form of federal and

state governments were formed, and for these the Union, cemented by revolutionary blood, was established. They are right—they came not from the feeble power of man, their origin is divine; they were promulgated in God's declaration of equality, "love thy neighbor as thyself," and afterwards in the golden rule of "doing unto others as we would be done by;" and this great idea of liberty has struggled for recognition amid the rise and fall of empires, imperfectly existing in the democracies of Greece and Rome, found partial utterance in Magna Charta, Bill of rights and trial by jury, glowed in the breast of Cromwell and the Puritan, crossed the ocean in the Mayflower, remonstrated in resistance to the Stamp Act, thundered in the roll of drums at Bunker Hill, and finally culminated, full formed and majestic the great and dominant idea of the world in the Declaration of American Independence. The proposition consists in three words—man is free—the great fact which, firm as the foundation of God's eternal throne, shall stand unshaken amid the beating surge of time, and banish, forever banish, from the earth, all the absurd distinctions which, in other countries, have made, and in portions of our own would make our farming, mechanical and trading classes the serfs, vassals, and slaves of kings, lords, and nobles.

It is this individual and universal equality which is to save, not destroy, our country. Some good men have feared that the approach to universal suffrage might destroy the nation, whereas it is the safety of the nation—it is the great elevator of the masses—it moulds the character of the citizen, produces a superior nationality, and has exhibited itself in sublime results upon the intelligence, physical prosperity and glory of the American people. It leads to the education of the masses by giving to every man the right to vote, and opening the avenues to office to the highest and lowest alike. A man, to give an intelligent vote, must think, must reason, must discriminate, must be informed. If he aspires to office, he must be prepared to show qualifications for the discharge of its duties. Hence the universal doctrine of all our statesmen and sages of our pulpit and our press, that the whole people must be educated, that intelligence and virtue are the foundations of our political edifice, and that there is no safety for our free institutions while the masses remain in ignorance, no solid guaranty for our liberties while there is a single freeman in the land who cannot read the constitution of his country, and write his protest against oppression and misrule that the meeting house and the school house are the impregnable citadels and bulwarks of our free institutions. Here the colleges and schools in every city, town and hamlet throughout the land—the dissemination of knowledge through the press, from the stump, literary associations—all the natural offsprings and actual necessities of free suffrage and equal franchises. Hence is the incentive—the high training for American citizenship, and the intelligent exercise of that citizenship which moulds the statesman whose voice is heard in the Senate Chamber, in the counsels of cabinets, in the diplomacy of foreign governments, and gives full sweep and full play to that energetic mind which has, thus far developed the enormous energies and boundless enterprise of the American people, and also made them as skillful and terrible in war as they are effective in peace. Every boy inbibes the genius of our free institutions. The poor friendless rail-splitter rises to the proudest pinnacle of human power [Cheers] The poor tailor boy becomes and is now our President, [cheers.] the ferry boy the Chief Justice of our Supreme Court, (cheers.) and the humble tanner boys become the great commander, who marshals a million of veteran warriors in the great cause of union and liberty, and holds up the flaming symbol of emancipation to a whole race of mankind. (Applause.)

It elevates labor, and assigns to it the nobility which God gave it—holds out to it the highest stimulous, honors and emoluments. I have not the time to trace the wonderful contrast between the respectability of labor in this country and in those countries of Europe, and in the slave States of our own land, where proud and pampered aristocrats looked down upon the vocation of the laborer as a menial one, and despised the sunburned face and soiled hands of "small fisted farmers and greasy mechanics." Suffice it to say that in all our free Northern States labor, whether of the head or the hands, is honorable; and that our wealth and prosperity spring from the strong right arms of our farmers and mechanics, and the moral and intellectual advancement of our people; and, while I can highly esteem the glories which my country has achieved in necessary and self-defensive war, and regard with pride the battle fields which have shed such imperishable lustre upon American prowess, yet I trust that the future glories of the country shall be those of peace, of free labor, of commerce, of agriculture, of the arts, of religion; when our heroes shall be those of industry, when upon our prairies labor in every county shall have her fairs and festive days, and the wild wood shall ring with her notes of lofty cheer, and when, in processions, in fraternal companionship with the stars and stripes, another banner shall be borne, and on that other banner inscribed two golden words—"Liberty and Free Labor." (Great applause.)

Under the moulding influences of our free institutions our country, up to the beginning of the late war, had prospered without a parallel; so much so that, as a people, we congratulated ourselves that we were not only the freest but happiest and most prosperous people upon the face of the earth. In our commerce, agriculture and manufactures, in railroads and ships, in discoveries and inventions, in churches and schools, and in our farms and flocks, and as we looked at our thirty millions of people stretching across an entire continent, with all the elements of prosperity and power such as no nation ever possessed before, we little dreamed that any of our people and least of all, those who had been the beneficiaries of the government, who had enjoyed its offices and its honors, and upon whom its favors and blessings had been showered with a liberal hand, would be the first to raise their unhallowed hands against the nation, and attempt to level in the dust the fairest, freest, and happiest government on the face of the earth.

Now it is easy to show that our national troubles were not the result of any defect in the principles of free government, but the immediate and inevitable offspring of a departure from the principles of liberty and equality, which were designed to be the corner-stones of the temple of liberty which our fathers erected; in other words, that the seeds of slavery, which were left in the States at the foundation of the government, grew up to be the bitter Upas tree which was to poison the fountains of public prosperity, and peril the life of the nation. The system of slavery existing in our Southern States fostered interests, tastes, opinions, manners and prejudices at war with the genius of our institutions, and necessarily divided our people. Two different forms of government and civil society, both upheld by great and powerful interests and energies, were striving for supremacy. Two systems of labor, one free and the other slave, incompatible, warring, belligerent, were arrayed against each other. Slavery, in the States which our fathers had supposed would die out because of its then universally admitted evils, had rapidly increased, and become to be a cherished institution of the slaveholders of the South, and blending itself with the politics of the country, it was the balance of power which for a time wielded, shaped and controlled the policy of the country. It became almost the government of the country, and every important measure effecting the prosperity of the country, had to be decided by its bearings and relations to the institutions of slavery. It was not only jealous and tenacious of the powers it had, but became arrogant and supercilious and grasping, demanding not only that it should be let alone in the States, but have constitutional recognition everywhere; that all our fair and virgin territories, way down to the setting sun on the shore of the Pacific, should be opened free to its expansion. It seemed tending rapidly towards universal domination; large numbers in the North sympathized with its demands. The national government yielded and was controlled by it, and to oppose it was denounced as fanaticism, and to agitate it was unpatriotic and a crime—the forum the Senate Chamber, the press, and even the pulpit were left free to denounce any other wrong, but they were to "let alone," as the term was, this sum of all villainies which had gilded its hideous personnel with the sobriquet of the "peculiar institution," the "cherished," the "patriarchial." Dooming to ignorance prostitution, and crime four millions of human beings, appropriating the proceeds of their labor, sundering all domestic ties, prohibiting all educational, moral and religious improvements by severest penalties, enforcing obedience and abject servility by the lash, the revolver and the bloodhound, the slave holder, rioting in wealth and luxuries obtained from the bended back, and the shrill agonies of the crouching slave, learned to despise labor and the laborer, without regard to caste, and to denounce free society as a failure, and made the condition of the poor whites of the South scarcely better

than that of the poor slaves themselves, as will be testified to you by the officers and soldiers who have seen them at their homes in the South, as well as by your own observation of the prisoners which we have had in our custody. I will not follow the history; the fierce, exacting, domineering, bullying spirit of slavery in our national capital—its attempt to establish itself by force upon the territory of bleeding Kansas, &c., but simply say that its front became so brazen, and its aims and demands were at such hostile variance with our free institutions, that it became evident that the two systems of freedom and slavery could not exist in the same land; and the great emancipator, Abraham Lincoln, defined and proclaimed what long had been the convictions of our good and patriotic statesmen, that the nation could not remain half slave and half free—that a house divided against itself can not stand. When the slave-holders discovered that their power must decrease by the admission of new free states, and they could no longer rely implicitly upon the co-operation of Northern sympathizers, and that there was a strong and fixed determination in the free States to resist further encroachment they waxed wroth, and in the pride and insolence which the system had engendered, they drew the sword and struck at the heart of the nation; raised the banner of revolt; went out of the Union; organized war; fired upon our flag, and forced us, in self-defense, into that bloody and destructive war, which, thank God and the strong right arms of our brave boys, has resulted in the total extermination of the accursed monster, and the restoration of our flag wherever traitor hands had pulled it down. [Applause.]

I feel highly honored to-day that I have the opportunity of meeting so many of our returned officers and soldiers here, for somehow I cannot divest myself of the feeling that I have been in the war myself, and am a returned soldier, although I have only on one or two occasions smelt the gunpowder of the enemy. [Laughter.] Yet under my administration the State of Illinois has sent nearly two hundred thousand brave volunteers to the field, as will be testified to you by my noble and great Adjutant General, who has kept a faithful record, and who himself, if not in actual battle, has been a gallant soldier in the war. I have aided in raising, equipping, and providing for the wants, and comfort, and health of our troops; have signed the commissions of nearly all the officers appointed in our State, from that of Lieutenant General Grant down to the lowest commissioned officer. Instead of four years of easy, dignified leisure, signing the commmissions of Justices of the Peace and Notaries Public, and going to Europe, as a Governor may be supposed to do, my time for the last four years has been absorbed in conference with and correspondence with the government at Washington, and with the officers and soldiers, and in anxious thought for their success and interests, and for their welfare; doing all I could in my feeble way to relieve the wants of the soldiers, and for a vigorous prosecution of the war. [Applause.] And, though I have not been in the thickest of the fray, as you have been, while you have been driving the enemy in the front, I have kept up a deadly and destructive fire upon the enemy in the rear. [Applause.]

Soldiers, Peace hath her victories as well as War. You must remember that I was Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy of Illinois! Well, in the month of June, 1863, I heard that a large detachment of the enemy had taken possession and fortified themselves in the State House at Springfield, and after declaring that they were for peace—that the war was unrighteous, unholy, &c., and the South could not be conquered, they resolved to usurp the powers of their commander-in-chief, and to run the government upon the style and manner of the rebel States. (Laughter.) I sent out a party of reconnoissance, called my staff, Lieutenant General Hoffman, Adjutant General Fuller, Colonel "Uncle Jesse," Adjutant O. M. Hatch, and Quartermaster Col. S. S. Mann, and military correspondent Col. Joe Forrest, and after mature deliberation resolved to attack the enemy in his stronghold, and put them to rout or die in the last ditch. (Laughter.) I then went to work and prepared a deadly missive, which Ike Cook called a "perouge," (great laughter.) and as soon as it was finished went and fired into the ranks of the enemy, and such a grand skedaddle you have not seen since the evacuation of Atlanta. (Laughter.) Col. Buckmaster, with great valor and stratagem, tried to rally the copperheads and restore order to his broken columns, but finding all his efforts ineffectual, he flashed his speaker's hammer in fiery circles, and cried out, "Boys, each of you take his hat and save himself." [Great laughter and repeated cheering.] While, therefore, I take to myself none of the honor, yet I can but feel to rejoice with exceeding great joy to-day, that after four years of trial, suffering, sometimes with prosperous, sometimes with adverse, fortune, your labors have not been a failure, but victory on every hand has crowned your arms, and now there is no fire in the front, and none in the rear. [Applause.] This is indeed a proud day for you, for the storm has passed away, and the moring sun, as he rose in majesty, glory and beauty on this Fourth of July, shines upon our land triumphant over the grave of treason, and disenthralled from the shackles and curse of slavery—over a land to which peace and union are restored, and where all her millions, from North to South, from East to West, and *all, all are free.* [Great cheering.]

Officers and soldiers, we have watched your course. You have done well—mighty well. Your devotion to your country is full of sublimity, and your achievements not surpassed by the veterans of the ancient republics, whose patriotism and deeds of valor have been the theme of history, poesy and song for over a thousand years. You have given Illinois a great fame throughout the civilized world; to be an Illinoisan, to have been an Illinois soldier was to be everything that had the import of a great name, and synonymous with everything that was sublime in patriotism, noble in daring, or great in achievement; for while her sons have nobly fought and bravely fell on every battle field of the war, there is not a single blot upon the blazing star which answers to her name in the glorious galaxy of the thirty four. She gave to the nation a President, the most magnificent man in the world: [cheers] she gave to the army the world's great commander, and a host of distinguished Generals—Logan, Palmer, Oglesby, Grierson and numerous others—and colonels and officers of every grade, unequalled for their skill and bravery. [Great cheering.] And thank God, the people of this country—our wise men and beautiful women—are disposed to pay honor to whom honor is due; and the private soldier who for small pay has sundered every domestic tie, and faithfully for three years fought in the ranks, enduring the heat and cold, trudging through mud and rain and snow and swamps, and in the front rank, where deadly hail of shot and shell falls thickest, and the groans of the dying are loudest, is as much entitled to the warm grasp of our hand and the affection of our hearts, as the proudest major general who ever wore a star upon his shoulder. They fight, they suffer and they die; and though their names are scarce heard in print, though nameless and unknown save to a small circle, yet they are the unfailing, impregnable and first and last reliance of a free people in its hour of extremity and danger; and while I give all honor to the immortal Sherman, the unequalled Grant, yet I say, I would ever say, God bless the American private soldier. [Cheering. I am also proud on your account, fellow-citizens, that I can stand up here to-day and say that no county in the State has more nobly sustained the government, or more liberally contributed in men and means, than the glorious county of Kane. While she has sent out the flower of her youth to do battle for the Union, she has had at home a gallant army of patriotic men and noble hearted women, who have labored by day and by night to mitigate the severities of the campaign by large and munificent contributions to our State and Sanitary Commissions, and also in sustaining and strengthening the hands of your loyal State officers at home. [Applause.] And perhaps many of you will be surprised to hear that Kane county has furnished (as will be vouched by Adjutant General Fuller, who has kept the record, and can give you the name of every man, which no other man could do but Fuller,) an army itself; and I verily believe, that with Gen. Lynch or Col. Josiyn at their head, they could march to the halls of the Montezumas and frighten Mr. Maxmimilian from his throne. [Loud cheering, and cries of "Good."]

Soldiers, you have been the best politicians I ever knew. You have thoroughly understood the rights of our erring Southern brethren, and, instead of getting peace by long-winded compromises, you have conquered the only practicable and lasting peace at the point of the bayonet and mouth of the cannon, and you have given a most salutary lesson to the haughty, aristocratic chivalry of the South, by letting them know that there were good and brave people in the world as well as they, and that they could not trample upon the laws and upset the government with impunity. [Applause.] You have travelled the whole circuit of the rebellion—

see—through Mississippi, and Tennessee, and Alabama, and Georgia, to the sea; you expected a fight, but old Billy could not get it out of them—they would not fight, for the great Sherman—

"He was monarch of all he surveyed,
His rights there were none to dispute;"

[applause,] while

"From *Cairo* all round to the sea,
You were lords of the FOWL AND THE BRUTE."

[Great laughter and cheering.]

Thence you went through the swamps of South Carolina to Raleigh, in North Carolina, and after a universal skedaddle of the whole rebel crew, and the capture of one old woman, crinoline, boots and all, [laughter] you went to the proud capital of the country, where you witnessed the grandest military pageant and gave the nation the grandest military review ever witnessed in the tide of time, and then you came home, through many States, by easy stages, and here you are to-day, the happiest lot of soldiers I ever saw, kissing your wives, and I don't know but your sweethearts too, [laughter and cheers] and your old Governor, Dick No. 1, [applause] is talking to you, the happiest fellow in the whole lot—and Fuller next. Why, boys, you have learned more practical geography than you could learn at college in a year with half a dozen globes. What's the use of a globe after you have walked over it, and nearly kicked it to pieces? [Laughter and applause] You have traversed the great rivers, lakes, bayous, swamps, plains, mountains, cities, orange groves, sunny fields and cane brakes; but wherever you have been you have carried the old flag in honor and triumph, and planted it where no ruthless traitor-hand has dared to take it down. [Cheers.] You have participated in most of the great battles of this great war, and for many of the most shining victories we are indebted to your unfaltering prowess, your noble deeds and gallant daring. Donelson, Pea Ridge, Shiloh, Corinth, Hatchie, Arkansas Post, Port Gibson, Raymond, Jackson, Champion Hills, Vicksburg, Perryville, Stone River, Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, Mission Ridge, Ressaca, Dallas, Peach Tree Creek, Atlanta, Bentonville, Goldsboro, are emblazoned on your banners—and the 8th Cavalry at Gettysburg, and in almost every battle with the Army of the Potomac. [Great cheers and waving of handkerchiefs.]

All hail, glorious banners of the stars! proud emblem of the freedom, of the nationality of the undivded and indivisible U. S. A. (Cheers.) Ah! old tattered banners repo-ing quietly in your places among the archives of the State, where General Fuller and myself have placed them to be kept forever. They are not so bright as when first their silken and starry folds were placed by Columbia's fair daughters in the hands of their country's brave defenders, but each one is history in itself—how many leagues have they been borne, how they tell of scenes of trial, of the long march, of hissing minie balls, screaming shell, and gleaming bayonet, and the cannon's loud and dreadful roar. Not so bright, but now they have a consecrated meaning, and every star, and every rag; and every bullet-pierced fold is eloquent of liberty, union, and glorious victory. (Great cheering)

Of the thousands of troops which Kane county sent to the field, it is not a high estimate to say that a large proportion have died in actual battles, or from wounds or disease contracted in the service. Ah! they sleep in honored graves far away from their loved ones, in Shiloh's bloody woods, on the cloud-enveloped summits of Lookout Mountain, on the banks of our rivers, in the sands of the ocean shore, in narrow little cells they sleep, and there they will sleep till the morning of the resurrection. They died for their country—it may be one, two, three and four from the same roof—filling the land with bereaved widows, homeless orphans, weeping Rachels and sorrowing Jacobs—it may be the first and only born—first and only pledge of wedded love—the last tie is sundered, the last link is broken. Ah, you may build to the martyred dead a monumental pyramid of solid marble which shall pierce the skies, or fill the vast fields of unfathomed space with heaps of shining gold, but you will never pay that fond mother for the loss of that darling boy who laid down his life upon the altar of his country. And yet his grave is an immortal grave, and his memory will be cherished by men, in all the cycles of the future, as long as the love of exalted services or disinterested patriotism shall sway the impulses of the human heart, and

"Oh! if there be on this earthly sphere
A boon, an offering Heaven holds dear,
Sure 'tis the last libation liberty draws
From the heart that suffers and bleeds in her cause.'

[Great sensation.] But the living are left with us—the wounded and the disabled, the widow and the orphan, the sorrowing and the stricken, the needy and the destitute—and will we not honor the dead by comforting the living; and will we not, so far as in us lies, provide for the relief and support of every destitute widow, and for the support and education of every indigent orphan of the deceased and disabled soldier? I have twice recommended to the Legislature to set apart a special fund for this purpose. And I now desire to say to the people of Kane county, and every county, that all the glory she has received in this war will be tarnished if with all her wealth and resources, anywhere in her boundary a single boy or girl of one of her deceased, or disabled soldiers shall suffer for want of that support which the manly arm of the father might have given. (Cheers, and cries of that's so.) He stood between you and your enemies a living wall of fire; and now as the crippled soldier hobbles along on his crutch, saying, "I lost this leg as we scaled the heights of Donelson, this arm as we drove the enemy at the Hatchie, this eye as we climbed the heights of Mission Ridge; or the poor wounded soldier on the battle field, having seen the sun for the last time, and thinks of the dear ones at home, the hurried question runs through his mind, Who shall protect my wife amid the cold charities of an unfriendly world? and sends to you and me the prayer, "Let no rude and unhallowed hand be laid on that bright-eyed boy and girl of mine." [Sensation.] No, fellow-citizens, they are the children of the State and the country, and there are two things which I would do. I would make it the duty of the County Court to levy a tax—it will not be a large one, nor of many years continuance—to be legalized by the Legislature, and most sacredly to be applied to the support of every poor disabled soldier and soldier's widow, and for the support and education of every soldier's orphan. [Cheers.] Another thing, I would select in the cemetery of your county seat—a beautiful piece of ground, which I would ornament with gravel walks and shade trees, and erect in the centre a beautiful monument of marble or granite, on which I would record in plain letters the name, with the number of his company and regiment, and the place and date of his death of every officer and private of Kane county who had died a glorious martyr to his country. (Cheers.)

Officers and soldiers, it is not simply that you have fought bravely and well—that you have borne our flag farther than the legions of Cæsar bore the Roman eagles over the conquered provinces of the world—it is not all these things which entitles you to the gratitude of the world, so much as the high and sacred cause for which you fought. Your brave comrades have died, and you have risked your lives that the nation and the Union might live, and you have proclaimed at the point of the bayonet the divine right of all men to be free. (Applause.) Had you failed, what anarchy, what ruin would have followed! Whose farm or fields would have been worth a dollar? Our own bright Illinois, our heaven-favored heritage, our land flowing with milk and honey, would be overrun with rebel hordes and robbing, murdering guerrillas, our wives, and children fleeing from their homes—armies would be marching, and commanders winning their victories, our borders would blaze with bayonets and bristle with cannon, the land would flame with burning towns and cities, our Union would be dissolved, the experiment of self-government would have failed, and while a wail of woe went up from the lovers of liberty throughout the world, despots would raise a hideous yell over the expiring liberties of our country. (Great cheering.)

But thanks to you, you have not failed; you have carried our country through the most fiery ordeal which no other nation could have withstood. You have silenced forever the clamors of English statesmen that a government of the people could not withstand the convulsions of civil war. While you have driven back the enemy on the other side of the Mississippi, on this side we have pushed forward the arts of peace, quietly conducted the country through a Presidential election, kept up the machinery of regular government, and maintained the public order to the astonishment of the world. And to-day this great goverment stands self-poised, not a nerve or muscle weakened or relaxed, with all its hitherto dormant but stern and mighty energies developed and made strong and available till to-day we

are the most honored and the most feared nation in the world, and could defy the world in arms. But thanks to you, the accursed blot of human slavery, which has divided and distracted us at home and sullied our name abroad, is wiped out, and every man in America is free [Great cheering.]

All hail, mighty day! Thank God I have lived to see the principles go up in ten years which went down in 1855; when I can see, plain as the sun at noonday, the glittering standard of the nation's redemption. and when borne on the wings of the winds I hear the pibrock of the highlanders—the slogan shout of universal emancipation. All hail glorious sister, Missouri! Come with renewed heart; come with bright and beaming eyes, and fair and throbbing bosom, into the family of free States. (Cheers.) All hail my Maryland. thou who stonest the prophets, for a great light has shown upon thy road to Damascus. All hail Tennessee, and Andy Johnson, and especially Parson Brownlow. (Applause.) All hail Georgia, and "good-bye, massa Stephens. for Old Shady am a coming." (Cheers.) All hail naughty, erring little sister, South Carolina; come and lay thy peevish, waspish, tumultuous little cheeks upon the bosom of thy father, Andy, and say, Father, I have sinned, and am no longer worthy. (Cheers and laughter.) All hail Mississippi; come because Jeff has fallen in the last ditch. [Laughter.) All hail Old Virginia; come shouting the mighty American Marseilles, "Glory! Glory! John Brown's Soul is Marching On!" And hail. all the sisters with joined hands, all hail; forever all hail United States of America, for in all your broad boundaries from ocean to ocean, and from Maine to Oregon, all thy children are free.

[This part of the speech was received with tumultuous cheering.]

There is great uneasiness in the minds of sympathizers with treason, that the nation had incurred by the war a great national debt, which the country will never pay. What a set of ill-omened birds this age is afflicted with. who always have a nightmare upon their affrighted visions. We can't coerce a State—we can't subjugate the South—we can't pay the expenses of the war—we can't do away with slavery, and now we can't pay the national debt. Now, my dear friends, "Let not your spirits be troubled." This great nation, with its increasing millions of people, for now that the only black spot upon our sun—slavery—is removed, emigration will pour into the South and the North from foreign countries like an avalanche, and with our vastly increasing billions of taxable property, the United States will walk forward like a Hercules, not feeling the burthen, and the boy is now born who will see the last dollar of our national debt paid off. [Applause.] Some say we will have to repudiate. as they said we would have to back down to the South. As for me, I would brand with the same indellible stain the repudiator and traitor, and hang both together. The only debt we can never pay is the debt we owe our country's brave defenders. [Applause.]

Officers and soldiers, I am not here to lecture you as to your duties, as you go to resume your duties as citizens. If those who predict such a bad state of morals from the returned soldiers and give them good advice, would take care of their own morals, it would be better for society. (Loud cheers, mingled with laughter.) I heard a politician in Chicago, who I suppose. has not seen a bible in six months, drinks five cent lager and forty rod young Bourbon, say we would have a hell of a time when our returned soldiers were let loose upon the community. Now, thinks I, if you don't keep shady you will have your morals improved. (Laughter.) I can say that for those who are fearful of demoralization among our citizen soldiers, that I have seen many whole regiments disbanded during the last two years, and the officers and soldiers have quietly resumed their former avocations, are orderly and quiet. and I will put them against any other thousand men in the State for good behavior and obedience to the laws. (Cries of "that's so," and "good.") The discipline of the soldier is elevating and not corrupting, and I have no fears they will not be gentlemen and good citizens. Our soldiers are not mere hirelings, but they are our brothers and kinsmen, as intelligent as ourselves, who have studied well the principles and objects for which they have fought. All the gold of California could not have induced them to be the target for whole regiments to shoot at, but they are the soldiers of principle, fighting to maintain the right. You who have been fighting to maintain the law. All the marshaled hosts of Sher-

supremacy of the constitution and laws, and to punish the wicked men who have trampled upon the law and raised the banner of revolt. You have been a great national police to bring criminals to punishment, and now you have restored the authority of public law and the quiet of public order, so that from ocean to ocean the American citizen can traverse the circuit of the Union and feel the protection and the all-abiding supremacy and power of American law. And can we suppose for a moment that those who have been most prompt to restore the authority of law to the land, will be the first to break the law? (Cheers.) I think myself you are a very respectable looking set of gentlemen for Sherman's bummers. (Laughter.) All the advice I have to give you is. to tell you to go home to your wives if you have got a wife. If you ain't got one. capture one. [laughter,] not a Jeff Davis, but a "raal" genuine, *bona fide*. sure enough woman. (Much laughter.) Your fighting for your country won't *set you back any*. I never saw a real pretty girl but who loved a blue coat with brass buttons. (cries of "that's so,") and you know she would be monstrous ugly if she had a copperhead in her eye. (Laughter) Now, boys, I know you are brave, and have faced the cannon's mouth, and have stormed every battery in your way. but there is one battery which you can never storm, and that is the battery of sweet smiles and bright eyes. My head for a football, you'll always surrender on the first ballot. [Laughter and cheers.]

Jeff Davis has proven himself the most illustrious captain of his age—he deals in stratagem—he was smart, and knew well that our boys would not fight or capture a woman, and the only mistake he committed was he was not a woman. (Laughter and applause.) Jeff is like the great Achilles, whose only vulnerable part was his heel. Alas! all the strategy of the great Jeff failed by reason of his boots. What a slight circumstance affects the destiny of man and nations. Rome was notified of the assault of a mighty army by the gabble of a goose and saved Alas, the fortunes of the Confederate army went down in darkness in consequence of a pair of boots. (Laughter.)

There is no achievement so grand as this last end of the great die-in-the-ditch Confederacy since those times way back in the shady past, whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, to-wit, since those days when Jack and Gill went up the hill after a pail of water. (Great laughter.) Indeed, I know nothing in all my reading in Baron Munchausen, Jack the Giant Killer, not even the gander fight in Peter Parley or Goody Two Shoes, I don't know which can begin to compare with the splendid and gallant surrender of this great Lion in his lair, the mighty chief of Southern chivalry, and of the great but defunct Confederacy. (Laughter.)

There is one other cause of congratulation for you today. I must congratulate you that whatever may have been the divisions of opinions when you left home; however much the war was denounced; however much you were denounced as Lincoln hirelings and abolition fanatics; however much men said we could never conquer the South. and looked at you askance from under the hat, yet now those old fire-in-the-rear veterans are the very ones to welcome you with the "Io Triumphe!" and the "Grand all Hail!" and they shout with a louder shout than your old Union friends. They claim to be the chief priests in the synagogue. (Laughter.) Indeed, I have not seen a copperhead since Lee's surrender. (Laughter.) Whether they were included in the surrender or not, I do not know. At all events, I give them credit for most rapid conversion, and all the zeal of new proselytes. and I especially give them credit for their most remarkable modesty [Laughter.] I wonder if they could be prevailed on to have some office; if so, I advise you to go straight to the polls and vote for them (over the left.) [Laughter and cheers.]

The war is over—our arms are triumphant—the rebels have long since learned that one Southern man could not whip five Northern men. I suppose they would be willing to pair off even now. [Laughter.] May be they would find that an American citizen of African descent was quite enough for them. (Laughter.) But peace prevails in the land, yet peace brings with it the most complicated questions. I would not cloud the buoyant anticipations with gloom, but we are not yet safe out of the difficulties which have environed the country. Perils surround which are imminent, which will require clear heads and honest and stout hearts to discern and overcome. We are not safe until the great questions in

and forever settled, and upon such a basis as to prevent the recurrence of another war to mar our peace and endanger the safety of the Union. (All of that's so.] The thought is a horrible one, that, after all the blood and tears and sufferings and expense of this four years, the same bones of contention may be left, and the same rebel spirit may be left to influence our policy, finally to culminate in another fearful and bloody war. And first, it must now be settled once and forever, that treason is a crime, and it must be punished as such. The leading traitors, or enough of them to vindicate the law, who instigated the rebellion, who stirred up the people to revolt, must be tried, convicted and hung for their crime of treason, which, the world over, has been pronounced the highest crime known to the law. Unfortunately they have set a precedent, perhaps the most memorable precedent in the history of the world. On the 2d day of December, 1859, a decrepit old man whose head was whitened with the frosts of many winters, when asked why sentence of death should not be pronounced, said, he "never intended murder or treason, or the destruction of property, or to excite or to incite slaves to rebellion, or to make an insurrection. He only intended to make slaves free without the snapping of a gun on either side and take them to Canada. The New Testament commanded him to remember them that are in bonds as bound with them. I believe to have interfered in behalf of His despised poor was not wrong, but right." On his way to the scaffold he saw a little negro girl gazing at him with wondering face, and he stopped and, stooping down, kissed and blessed her, and taking his place upon the scaffold his spirit went to meet its God. The fiendish spirit of slavery stood by without compassion. Governor Wise, having the power to extend pardon to this poor old man, said no, and all rebeldom sent up a shout of rejoicing. And now, when Jeff Davis and Wise, who are responsible for two hundred thousand murders, and for treason black as hell, when they swing from a similar gallows, according to the precedent they have set, they will think, I suppose, in more senses than one, that John Brown's soul is marching on. [Loud cheers.] When Copperheads plead for magnanimity, ask them what they said in behalf of poor old John Brown! Have they ever cried out for magnanimity to other murderers and convicts who have violated the law? And yet, for Jeff Davis, who has been a wholesale murderer, who has struck at the life of the whole nation, and rolled the red wave of bloody civil war over the land, they say we must be *magnanimous*. [Sensation.] We shoot the poor deserter and the poor soldier who is found sleeping at his post of guard, but the nation must be magnanimous and not execute Jeff Davis!

The most ponderous volume can never portray the enormous wickedness of these traitors. Barbarities which would have disgraced the most savage nation of antiquity; barbarities shocking in the sight of God and man; the cold-blooded murder and burying alive of our colored troops at Columbus, Fort Pillow and other points; the attempted burning of our large cities, regardless of the lives of innocent women and children; the importation of poisoned shirts and garments infected with yellow fever and small pox, to be presented to the President, and to spread pestilence among our soldiers; the starvation in cold blood of 20,000 of our prisoners at Andersonville, with the full knowledge of the leaders, and the cold-blooded murder of the noble Lincoln; and yet for any American to get up in Illinois and preach magnanimity to the infernal traitors who set on foot and connive at these bloody deeds—any such man ought to be hung on the same sour apple tree with Jeff Davis himself. [Loud cheers] While I would, through magnanimity, and also from necessity, extend pardon to the masses upon their taking the oath, yet I would see that the penalty was executed upon a sufficient number to vindicate the law—not in resentment or malice, but as an example for all time to come. "The law should be a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well." I would make the name of the traitor odious. I would let the extreme punishment of the law be meted out to him, to stand forever as a warning to all posterity, that whoever he may be, however high his title or proud his name, whoever thrusts himself in the path of this Republic to honor and renown; whoever shall lift a parricidal arm to destroy the government, the union, and liberties of his country, shall meet a traitor's doom, and his name, like that of Arnold, Booth and Davis, be gibbeted on every hill-top throughout the land as a monument of his punishment, and the shame and grief of his country. [Loud applause.]

advise the government to magnanimity. Now we have stood a great deal from England. At her demand we surrendered Mason and Slidell, the greatest national degredation, in my judgment, to which this country ever submitted. Her governing classes have sympathized and feasted the rebels they have found in London. They have built, armed, equipped and manned British cruisers to prey upon our commerce. They have all the time prayed for and predicted our defeat, and in our darkest hours have given encouragement to the enemy, and we have uncomplainingly submitted to all these things; but there is one thing we won't stand from England, and I hope that Secretary Seward will immediately inform Lord Russell that there is one thing we won't stand from her, and that is her advice. All we have to say to her is, mind your own business. We do not interfere in the domestic affairs of any foreign nation, and they shall not interfere with ours. We don't want war, but if forced upon us we would as soon send General Sherman with 500,000 of our veterans over to make a breakfast of Canada as not (Cheers.) Secretary Seward has expressed the united sentiment of the American people in notifying England to make ample reparation for the injuries sustained by our commerce from the Alabama and of her cruisers—and while we want no war, yet every man, woman and child, and a million of trained veterans, stand ready, at the drop of a hat, whenever the national honor shall require, to go over into Canada some foggy morning and to say, "How are you, Johnny Bull?" [Great cheering.]

But, again, there are other questions to settle. No rebellious State should be permitted to resume its complete political relations with the government until it is clearly manifest that the loyal and not the disloyal element is to have the control of the government. (Cheers.) I would keep that pestiferous State, South Carolina out in the cold upon probation for a thousand years, unless she gave evidence of fruits meet for repentance, until I was satisfied she was effectually cured of her States rights doctrine of secession; and I would not be cheated by pardoned rebels taking the oath of allegiance, when they are instructed by Reverdy Johnson and others that they can do so without perjury, although they do not intend to observe and abide it. (Cheers.) I have always believed that the States are not out of the Union, and cannot go out, and yet I perfectly agree with Mr. Lincoln, that whether they are or not is not material to the question, for whether in or out of the Union, they have deliberately arrayed themselves in deadly hostility to the government—deliberately, by ordinance of secession and the adoption of the Confederate constitution, declared themselves out of the Union, and by force of arms attempted to destroy the Union and the government; and some way has to be provided by which they are to resume friendly relations with the government, and it is certainly for the government to say upon what terms they may resume those friendly relations. Now I do not propose to make any issue with President Johnson, because it is not necessary, for he himself does not contend that the States are so in the Union, that they could go on now to legislate and send Senators and Representatives to Congress under their old State conststutions, as though no war had happened—for he himself has gone on to state the terms on which they may reform their State governments, and who may vote for the new constitution, which, of course, he could not do if they were to go on as States with the same government they had before the war: for then, under the Constitution, these States would fix the qualifications of the electors without any interference from the President or from Congress. But President Johnson has evidently taken the other view of the question, that, in States in rebellion, the national authorities are to have control until the State is restored to its former condition. He is not blindly committed to any one particular policy, but, as Mr. Lincoln did, is feeling his way. I have every confidence in him. I sat in the House of Representatives with him fifteen years ago, since which he has been in public life ever since as Representative, Senator, and Governor, and has a rich and large experience and matured judgment as a statesman, besides a warm heart for the people of every color. So far, President Johnson has only invited those residents of the States who were formerly voters, and who take the oath of allegiance, and are loyal, to form a constitution and to present such a republican form of State Governments as will entitle the State to the guaranty of the United States therefor. [Cheers, and cries of "that's so."]

The final decision is left with Congress—whether the States are merely in abeyance, or whether, by their re-

people of the State are to return to the National Union under a republican form of government, and Congress can decide whether the new State Government is Republican in form or not. In the admission of Louisiana as a State, Congress went so far as to prescribe in advance certain specific measures which were to be inserted in the Constitution, and which were afterwards decided by the Superior Court of the United States to be constitutional, in the case of Permoli vs. the first municipality of New Orleans. As a Senator of the United State, certainly I could consider no State Government Republican in form which was at variance with the fundamental principles of our republican institutions which denied the equality of all men before the law; which set aside the principle that governments justly exist by the consent of the governed, and that taxation and representation must go together. Applause. If I am wrong, the government is wrong. And I am here to-day to say that I could approve of no State government whose constitution or bill of rights does not deny, in express words, this right of a State to secede from the Union, and which does not provide that slavery shall be finally and forever abolished and prohibited, so that not even a root, seed, or grease spot shall remain of this sum of all villainies, the accursed system which has been the fountain of all our troubles, and of the fratricidal and bloody war which has desolated the land. Great cheering.

Again, it should be expressly provided that the leaders of the rebellion who have held offices, civil or military, under the Confederate Government, should be disfranchised and forever debarred the right of suffrage and the right to hold any office of honor or profit under the Government of the United States. Again, I would confer the right of suffrage upon all loyal men. Applause. I will not, by any act of mine, open the portals of the American ballot-box to pardoned rebels, whose hands are stained with treason, and are dripping with the blood of our brave soldier boys, and deny it to the poor colored man who has proved his allegiance to his country by brave and heroic deeds. Applause. They have rallied round the flag—he has brought a stalwart arm and a courageous heart to his government in the hour of its extremity and fearful need, and it would be the shame of the century and the age if he is to be disfranchised and left without a voice to such barbarous legislation as his rebel masters would frame for him. [Cheers, and cries of "that's so." Let me tell politicians that there is no half-way house in this matter, and the negro will surely be allowed the right of suffrage. Cheers. The moment the government decided that his aid was necessary to save the government, and put arms into his hands, the question was settled, because to bear arms is the highest position of honor, and if he was good enough to fight in the ranks side by side with our brave boys in blue, he is good enough to go to the polls and kill off the vote of a rebel or a copperhead. Loud cheers. If citizens in war, why not citizens in peace? They vote in many of the free States, and no harm has followed, and no complaint is made, and why not in the rebel States, especially as they constitute the principal part of the loyal people of those States, and, if not permitted to vote, every rebel State will send disloyal men to Congress, ready and plotting to precipitate the nation into internecine war whenever the South, through Northern co-operation, might deem it safe to strike for their independence. Cheers. You say I am radical. Well, every thing that is right is radically right, and every thing that is wrong is radically wrong, and the conservative claims that he is neither one nor the other, and I am glad that God and the people are against conservatives. Cheers and much laughter. "I would that you were hot or cold," says Holy Writ, "and, because you are neither hot nor cold, I will spew you out of my mouth." Cheers and laughter. Why can we not learn that what is just is always expedient? (Cheers.) The idea of expediency is the father of all the compromises which have brought woe upon our land. Let us learn from high and holy authority to hold fast to "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure—to abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good." (Cheers.) I have been successful as most men, and years ago I faced the frowns of an indignant public sentiment by going to the polls and voting against the amendment to the State Constitution prohibiting negroes from coming to the State of Illinois. (Cheers.) I have ever advocated the sweeping of the black laws from our statutes with a swift and resistless hand, and had the pleasure after so long a time, of seeing the last Legislature comply with the recommendations of my message in that regard. (Cheers.) As Governor of your State, in every case where malicious men have pursued the poor negro under the black laws to fines, imprisonment and sale, I have granted a full pardon; and when asked the reason, I have simply answered that I pardoned him for being black—that God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon the face of the earth. (Cheers.) I did it because the laws were unconstitutional, and because I would not disgrace the age and country in which I live, or allow the courts to occupy their time in enforcing such a barbarous law. I thank God that I have never cast a vote or uttered a sentiment against human freedom; and no loud alarums of popular applause, no shining height of human power shall ever seduce me to give up the God-given sentiments of my heart in favor of freedom and humanity. I believe that the right to vote is a most elevating process, and holds out the greatest inducements to education and preparation for its proper exercise. And for this reason I hold out the elective franchise freely to every poor wanderer from foreign oppression that he may at once commence preparation for the high duties of an American citizen. (Cheers.)

You say the negro is not intelligent enough to vote, but this test would lead to the disfranchisement of a large portion of the whites. Moreover, the perpetuity of our institutions depends not alone on the intelligence, but on the intelligence and VIRTUE of the people. The negroes have had sense enough to be loyal, and fight for the government; while their masters have only had sense enough to be traitors, and to fight against their country. I say our government exists by the virtue as well as the intelligence of the people, and while the negroes are not as literary as their aristocratic master, nor more learned than the poor whites, they have more virtue and honesty than both put together.

And lastly, we are making the experiment of self-government, and that test can never be properly made except by allowing all to vote, and giving the majority the right to rule. This is the genius of our government. I am willing to trust it, and believe that with these principles our glorious government, founded on the will of all, protected by the power of all, and protecting the rights of all, will survive all the storms of internal convulsions, can defy the world combined—and rising higher and higher in grandeur and in glory, will be the happiest, freest, and most honored nation among the nations of the world. (Cheers.) Then I am here to-day fearlessly to proclaim my creed, and to stand or fall by it. Now, here, elsewhere, always, I am against secession and slavery, for an undivided Union, for universal freedom, and for universal suffrage. [Great Cheering.]

If slavery had any lease for longer life, when it laid its assassin hand upon the life of the noble Lincoln for that last fearful crime its last lingering breath would be driven from its accursed body. Abraham Lincoln lived long enough to lead us through the Red Sea of this terrible war; he laid down the true policy upon which this nation is to live, and in his speeches, letters, messages, proclamations and great acts, he has left us lessons enough to guide us in all our duties as citizens, and in all our public affairs. Hundreds of books will be written, but were my object simply to make him immortal through all time, it would be enough, all else would be waste of paper, to say that on the 1st of January, 1865, Abraham Lincoln, the great emancipator, issued his proclamation of emancipation and gave freedom to his country, and to a long oppressed race.—Great cheering.—Abraham Lincoln—let us name the name once again in solemn, reverent silence, and leave it in deathless, undying splendor, forever shining on.

But though slavery and treason assassinated our President the government still lives. One of the sublimest pages of our history will be that on the day the death of the chief of the nation, in the room of an obscure hotel in the city of Washington, the oath of office was administered by Chief Justice Chase to the new President in the presence of a half dozen friends—of whom I was one—and straight forward without a jar the government moved majestically onward as though no calamity had fallen upon the nation. The assassin may slay an hundred presidents, but thank God the great government of the United States shall stand, and the gates of hell and death shall not prevail against it.—Great cheering.—Our government, by reason of the fiery ordeal through which is has passed, will be more honored, respected and feared throughout the world than ever before; and standing over the grave of

treason with the [illegible]

us, and with new and increasing faith in the capacity of man for self-government; like Miriam the prophetess we will raise our songs of triumph on the banks of our deliverence and joyfully sing, "Praise ye the Lord, for He hath gloriously triumphed, and the horse and rider hath he thrown into the sea."— Tremendous cheering.

The Governor was repeatedly cheered during the delivery of his speech, especially that part in which he defined his views on the suffrage question. At its close he was again greeted with enthusiastic cheers, and the people crowded around him to take him by the hand.

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